that industrial and urban development in each province was closely tied to the ability of its agricultural sector to export a staple product. Indeed, if one compares urban and industrial growth in the two provinces, one is struck more by the similarities than the differences. There was near equality in the level of urbanization, convergence in the degree of industrialization, and little difference in manufacturing value added. During the same period, however, agricultural cash incomes were much higher in Ontario. This leads me to be sceptical about the intra-provincial linkages from agriculture to industry on which McCallum places so much stress.

McCallum does point out significant variations in the spatial distribution of urban dwellers. In Quebec the urban population became increasingly concentrated in the metropolitan areas of Montreal and Quebec City, whereas in Ontario it was widely dispersed. This important difference calls for an explanation but I am not convinced that the staple model provides the right one. The staple model is a framework for explaining the growth of different sectors of the economy. It says little about the geographic distribution of economic activity. I think that this issue would be confronted better with a spatial model.

In the preface of his book, McCallum says: "This book is a work in economic history, but I have tried to make it readable to the non-specialist." He has succeeded admirably! I suspect, though, that some economists will be less than satisfied with the standard of economic analysis, since his discussions contain a number of analytical inconsistencies. For example in describing the difficulties faced by eastern farmers, he points to "declining yields due to continuous cropping of wheat, falling prices associated with increased western supplies, rising land prices and rents, and attacks from various destructive insects" (p. 36). Most economists would like to know why land prices and rents were rising if the marginal product of land was falling. When discussing the growth of Montreal, he says: "Relative to the cities and towns of Ontario, Montreal had abundant capital *and* abundant labour" (p. 98). In economics, abundance of one factor implies scarcity of another, yet McCallum never makes clear what that scarce factor is. Finally, his discussion of the modified staple approach in Chapter 8 is too vague to satisfy many economists.

Despite these shortcomings, I regard *Unequal Beginnings* as a significant contribution. New data are presented on urban concentration, agricultural income, and the industrial distribution of the work-force. The book also provides new insights into the role of factor endowments, comparative advantage and transportation costs. John McCallum's main contribution, however, has been to synthesize a wide body of data and literature, and present the result in an accessible and attractive package.

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Geoffrey Bilson. — *A Darkened House: Cholera in Nineteenth-Century Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980. Pp. 222.

Cholera appeared in nineteenth-century Western Europe and North America as a new, mysterious, rapidly disseminating, and often fatal epidemic disease. Such

characteristics, together with an irregular periodicity (after the first major outbreak in 1832, the disease subsided for years and sometimes decades before once again flaring up), made cholera a terrifyingly unpredictable stress on nineteenth-century societies.

Over the past two decades, historians, following the leads of Louis Chevalier in France and Charles Rosenberg in the United States, have exploited the cholera epidemics as sources for broader problems ranging from demography to popular culture. While Chevalier (1958) focused on the differential demographic impact according to social class divisions in Paris, Rosenberg (1962) skillfully used three consecutive epidemics of cholera separated by intervals of several decades to sample changes in American social and professional responses to a presumably similar stimulus. Since these pioneering studies, similar work transcending a narrow epidemiological perspective has been done for England, Russia and various other places.

With Geoffrey Bilson's *A Darkened House* the social historical approach to cholera epidemics has come to Canada. Bilson's avowed goal is to show how cholera "exacerbated existing tensions" and "had an impact on politics, medicine, and society" (p. 4). In successive chapters, he narrates the progress of the first outbreak of 1832 in Lower and Upper Canada, and the response of largely unprepared political and medical authorities. He then takes up the same story for the second major epidemic in 1834 before moving on to cholera in the Maritimes and to a less detailed consideration of later epidemics in 1849 and 1854. Finally, he discusses the rather undistinguished record of the medical profession throughout the period.

Bilson concludes that the overall demographic impact of the cholera epidemics in Canada was slight, though death rates more than doubled for the cities of Montreal and Quebec in 1832. In Lower Canada, the suspected linkage with Anglophone (especially Irish) immigration, the failure of effective quarantine measures and the unenthusiastic performance of Governor General Aylmer (he left the City of Quebec for his country estates during the epidemic of 1834) fuelled tensions in the Francophone community that eventually led to rebellion a few years later. Upper Canada, by contrast, welcomed immigrants; the cholera epidemics prompted active co-operation between Governor Colborne and the House of Assembly and the establishment of health boards and hospitals. Bilson remarks upon the absence of significant popular disorders as a result of panic or in protest against government regulations during the epidemics. Indeed, the only crowd action approaching a riot, that in Niagara in 1832, was in support of quarantine measures against an entering steamboat. Despite scattered resistance to burial regulations and to cholera hospitals, Canadians did not display the violence exhibited by Parisian workers or Russian peasants, a difference Bilson attributes to an undeveloped bureaucracy in Canada and poorly defined and largely unenforced regulations. One might also suggest that popular reactions to cholera reflected national differences in social structure and *mentalité*. It might be useful to compare Canada with the United States in this regard.

With the exception of the clear political impact in Quebec, Bilson does not portray cholera as an agent or even an index of change in nineteenth-century Canadian society. If the epidemics left a "residue of support" (p. 171) for public health measures, they did not overcome an inertia compounded of inadequate financial and legal resources and opposition to government intervention. Evidently, medical thought about cholera also changed remarkably little in Canada; a report of 1866 recommended quarantine but still hedged on the question of contagion and seemed oblivious of the work of Snow and Budd in England in the late 1840s on transmission of the disease by water.

Bilson's generally static interpretation contrasts with Rosenberg's conclusions for the United States (largely based on New York City) where "the cholera years" saw dramatic shifts in professional and public responses. To some extent the differences in the response of each country appear to result from different patterns of visitation and severity of the epidemics as well as from the less abundant Canadian medical professional sources. However, Bilson's framework, unfortunately, also tends to mask changes that may have occurred between 1832 and 1871; by devoting the bulk of his discussion to the first two years and to a detailed, sometimes tedious, narrative of cholera in many diverse places, Bilson reduces the possibilities for longer-term, in-depth comparisons of the response to cholera in the large urban context, such as Montreal or Toronto. *A Darkened House* nonetheless is a valuable contribution to Canadian medical and social history. As the author notes, this interdisciplinary field remains to be cultivated. The present work indicates the potential richness of such research.

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DESMOND MORTON with TERRY COPP. — *Working People: An Illustrated History of Canadian Labour.* Ottawa: Deneau & Greenberg, 1980. Pp. 317.

Books and articles on Canadian working-class history are no longer as scarce as they were ten or twenty years ago. *Labour/Le Travailleur*, founded in 1976, now publishes biannually, and each year an increasing number of theses and monographs on working-class institutions, culture and politics are turned out. Produced at this stage in the development of the historiography and based substantially upon the writings and research of other labour historians, Desmond Morton's *Working People* is as much a comment on the present state of the discipline as it is a contribution to the field itself. Against a colourful backdrop of Canadian political history, Morton traces the evolution of local and national labour movements from the days of the staple industries to the world of the white-collar worker of the late 1970s and links the various stages together with brief but factual accounts of every major and a great number of minor labour disputes which have accompanied the growth of industry and commerce in this country. The book explores the hardships and insecurity of working-class life, the international roots of trade unionism, the political struggle for favourable legislation, the internecine divisions within the labour movement and the changing attitudes of government and management towards workers and workers towards themselves. Although the study is primarily concerned with the organizers and organizations of the working class, Morton avoids the cold detachment of the institutional approach of earlier labour historians such as Harold Logan and R. H. Coats as well as the revolutionary rhetoric of Marxists Charles Lipton and Jack Scott. Morton puts to good use the best work of the new social and labour historians but, as would be expected from Des Morton, the book is more than simply a summary of all that has gone before. The author adds a few twists of his own to popular interpretations and draws on personal observation and analysis for much of the commentary on the post-World War II years.

A conspicuous feature of *Working People* is Morton's different handling of the book's numerous and various heroes. In the Introduction to the study the